

Montana Transportation Commission

June 5, 2006 telephone meeting

For additional information, please call (406) 444-7200 or visit the commission's web site at http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/trans_comm/meetings.shtml.
For the hearing impaired, the TTY number is (406) 444-7696 or 1-800-335-7592, or call the Montana Relay at 711. Alternative accessible formats of pertinent information will be provided upon request.

In attendance:

Bill Kennedy, Transportation Commission Chair
Nancy Espy, Transportation Commission Vice Chair
Kevin Howlett, Transportation Commissioner
Rick Griffith, Transportation Commissioner
Deb Kottel, Transportation Commissioner
Jim Lynch, Director –Montana Department of Transportation (MDT)
Jim Currie, MDT Deputy Director
Tim Reardon, MDT Chief Counsel
Sandra Straehl, MDT Rail, Transit & Planning Administrator
Loran Frazier, MDT Chief Engineer
Michael Kulbacki, FHWA Field Operations Engineer
Lorelle Demont, Transportation Commission Secretary

Chairman Kennedy called the meeting to order at 10:03 am.

Agenda item 1: Projects from May 25, 2006 letting

Frazier said there were five projects we advertised and opened bid on.

Project 1: West Laurel Interchange

Project IM-STPHS 90-8(154)433

Two bids were tendered. There were no errors or omissions in the low bid which was 0.18 percent under our engineers' estimate. Frazier noted that the commission did not award this project following its initial listing in the January 26, 2006 bid letting. At that time, we received only one bid which was 83.97 percent over the engineers' estimate. Frazier said something to note is we saved about \$1 million by readvertising.

Staff recommends the contract be awarded to Sletten Construction Company in the amount of \$3,680,244.50.

Project 2: JCT US 93 – JCT US 2

Project SFCS 548-1(9)4

Three bids were tendered. There were no errors or omissions in the low bid which was 9.72 percent under our engineers' estimate.

Staff recommends the contract be awarded to J T L Group Inc. – Kalispell in the amount of \$1,197,816.05.

Project 3: H St. – Park To Butte – Livingston

Project STPU 7409(2)

Two bids were tendered. There were no errors or omissions in the low bid which was 16.6 percent over our engineers' estimate.

Staff recommends the contract be awarded to A M Welles Inc. in the amount of \$1,160,100.

Project 4: **Sidewalks – Fox Farm / Park Garden**

Project CM 5299(71)

Two bids were tendered. There were no errors or omissions in the low bid which was 69.05 percent over our engineers' estimate.

Frazier said we went through our process, and were able to make adjustments for some items, but the low bid and the engineers' estimate were still too far apart, therefore staff recommends the commission not award this contract.

Lynch noted that this sidewalk would serve children going to and from Meadowlark School. Kottel said there has been a lot of frustration from the Fox Farm folks and noted that this is a highly visible road.

Howlett asked if there was any opportunity to work with the city of Great Falls to bid this. Lynch said probably not, but we could do some more investigation and rebid this with the next letting. Kennedy said he would recommend that.

Frazier said he just spoke to Mick Johnson, MDT Great Falls district administrator, about a project across the river that was just finished with substantially lower prices than we saw on this bid. Frazier proposed tying the sidewalk project with a bigger project in Great Falls to be let this fall. Lynch said that's too late.

Kottel said children currently have to walk on the road because there is no sidewalk.

Reardon said we need to update our estimate for concrete.

Kottel asked what 39354 meant under the column entitled *contract length*. Frazier said that was meant to be the contract completion date.

Kottel noted that United Materials is pouring concrete like crazy at the airport, so perhaps availability of materials was a contributing factor.

Project 5: **Deer Lodge – West**

Project STPS 272-1(8)0

Three bids were tendered. There were no errors or omissions in the low bid which was 19.79 percent over our engineers' estimate.

Staff recommends the contract be awarded to Jim Gilman Excavating Inc. in the amount of \$107,283.30.

Commissioner Kottel moved acceptance and award of projects 1,2,3, and 5, and not to award project 4; Commissioner Griffith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda item 2: Gallatin Canyon rumble strip installation

Straehl said this item is to request commission approval to program centerline rumble strips on US Highway 191 through the Gallatin Canyon. The project has a very high cost-benefit ratio. The intent is to keep trucks and other vehicles from crossing the centerline.

Commissioner Griffith moved to concur with the department's request to add this project to the program and move towards construction; Commissioner Espy seconded the motion.

Lynch said we normally wouldn't be bringing this to you in a conference call, but we hope to bid this project in July, so we needed to move quickly. Lynch noted this will be the first installation of centerline rumble strips in the state. We will be sensitive to motorcycle traffic, so there will be no rumble strips in the passing zones, only in the no-passing zones.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda item 3: Commission discussion

The commission's next meeting will be held June 28-29. A tour of area projects will begin at 10:30 am on June 28, departing from MDT's Billings office at 424 Morey Street. The meeting will be held June 29 in Red Lodge, starting at 8:30 am. Around noon, the group will take a tour of the Beartooth Highway.

Kennedy said signs have been installed in honor of Dean Roebling, the young man who was killed in a construction zone in Billings, and asked if it would be possible to fit in a dedication ceremony while everyone was in town, in coordination with the family. Lynch said he would ask MDT Public Information Officer Charity Watt Levis to contact Kennedy to get the details and begin making the necessary arrangements.

The meeting adjourned at 10:26 am.

Bill Kennedy, Chairman
Montana Transportation Commission

Jim Lynch, Director
Montana Department of Transportation

Lorelle Demont, Secretary
Montana Transportation Commission